



Honda HR-V



Tim Saunders is an advanced motorist and journalist.

He has always been passionate about motoring and regularly reviews cars from the leading manufacturers. His Youtube channel videos have been watched more than 335,000 times.

Motorists are an unloved species. They suffer from high taxes, profiteering and potholes. And it's never going to get better, especially in a recession.

It makes buying a vehicle a really really tough decision and one where the head must rule the heart. This is an area for good, sensible accountancy.

Enter the Honda HR-V. Poring over numbers is boring, thankfully this electric hybrid is anything but. With its striking design, with hints of sporty coupe about it, it is a striking SUV that's high enough up from each and every atrocious road surface for the driver to almost forget about those dastardly potholes that are getting bigger and bigger. On one road local to me I have seen the road starting to open up with a long crater forming down the middle. In no time at all third world roads are going to be of better quality.

When fuel prices continue rising but more importantly so does the Earth's temperature, we have to work smarter and Honda claims that this vehicle will return up to just over 60mpg,

helped by the fact that it can silently crawl along in EV mode, ensuring that on a full 40 litre fuel tank it can travel up to around 460 miles with emissions as low as 94g/km.

Although the front is quite bold and straight with slanting headlights, it grows on you. The rear is home to straight lines. It's certainly an interesting exercise in design. The black roof together with the black alloys contrast nicely against the premium sunlight white pearl two tone paintwork.

Inside, the substantial tweed seats are edged with expensive cream leather. We're not just talking rich tweed though because down the middle of the seat is a chequered flag strip, adding to the luxurious yet sporty feel. The cream continues on the dash making a pretty bright and airy cabin that has a high quality feel. The seats are comfortable and supportive. There's a power boot lid and the boot itself is large enough for a family's needs.

A trip to Somerset allows me to put the HR-V through its paces. We crawl through many sets of roadworks starting on the M27 in Hampshire through Wiltshire right to our destination. At these

ridiculously low speeds at least I can rest in the knowledge that we're in EV mode so not polluting. I find the large front a little awkward when parking because I'm not completely sure how much space I have but it's easy enough to manoeuvre.

It's at night when the fun is to be had. The roads are clear so there are just those pesky speed cameras to bear in mind. The engine can be a little noisy when over revved which can happen when you put your foot down due to the automatic gearbox. However there are gearshifts either side of the steering wheel allowing the driver more control of the gears if preferred. I have few complaints about the HR-V, it's a joy to drive and most importantly the driver arrives at their destination without any aches or pains.

Facts at a glance

Engine: 1.5-litre petrol hybrid

Price: £37,270 OTR

Power: 129bhp

0 to 60mph; 10.9secs

Top speed: 105mph

Watch the video review at www.testdrives.biz